

Claims 17-20 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(e) over US 5,929,956 to Neijzen et al. The present application is a continuation of US Application 09/154,019, filed September 16, 1998 (parent application). In the parent application, claims were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) and 103 over Neijzen et al. A copy is submitted herewith of a 37 CFR 1.131 declaration submitted in the parent application swearing behind the filing date of Neijzen et al. Therefore, Neijzen et al. is avoided as a 35 USC 102(e) reference and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the changes to the claims and the remarks herein, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the above-identified application. If the Examiner wishes to discuss the application further, or if additional information would be required, the undersigned will cooperate fully to assist in the prosecution of this application.

Please charge any fee necessary to enter this paper and any previous paper to deposit account 09-0468.

If the above-identified Examiner's Action is a final Action, and if the above-identified application will be abandoned without further action by applicants, applicants file a Notice of Appeal to the Board of Appeals and Interferences appealing the final rejection of the claims in the above-identified Examiner's Action. Please charge deposit account 09-0468 any fee necessary to enter such Notice of Appeal.

In the event that this amendment does not result in allowance of all such claims, the undersigned attorney respectfully requests a telephone interview at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

MPEP 713.01 states in part as follows:

Where the response to a first complete action includes a request for an interview or a telephone consultation to be initiated by the examiner, ...

the examiner, as soon as he or she has considered the effect of the response, should grant such request if it appears that the interview or consultation would result in expediting the case to a final action.

Respectfully submitted,

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- 3 -

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